

GOLF RADAR

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♦ (Top) Golf Battery departs 29 Palms and to Iraq

The 59 Hour Day

29 Palms to Kuwait to Iraq

by Emily A. Thompson

It started on a Thursday morning. First, an early rise to pack gear, draw weapons and board buses going from 29 Palms to March Air

Force Base. The USO welcomes us into a hangar with gentle smiles, television, and peanut butter & jelly sandwiches. We then scramble to pack and board a commercial C-10 airplane to John F. Kennedy International Airport, the last place for Golf to stand on American soil until spring, 2007.

On to Germany for a quick layover, crew change and refuel. We know we're no longer in the States, but it's impossible to tell from the view. One glowing city from above looks like the next; LA, NY, Kuwait"

At last we land, unload, and convoy to a Camp for debrief and some sleep. Almost all travel is in the evening and late into the night, making it impossible to take in the surroundings.

After a rest and some McDonald's cheeseburgers (yes the golden arches stretch that far), we move to another Camp to catch a C-130 into Iraq" final destinations, Ramadi, Fallujah, Al Qiam or Al Asad.

The mood trickles slowly along with the travel. We slide from a

sense of liberation from the forsaken 29 Palms, to complacency in the repetition of packing, boarding, sleeping, eating, unloading, and repacking. We are moving ever closer to our destination. We are easing into a war zone; Pacified by the whir of flight, and the pace of the process.

We arrive in Al Asad, or Taqatem, the last stops before reaching the RDF's, in the very small hours of Sunday morning, October first. Days have run together. Coming off the C-130, all that can be taken in of Al Asad is extreme darkness filled with hundreds of blue chemical lights, the hum of generators and aircraft, the blasting heat of the C-130's huge engine as we make our way around the bird's wing span, filing onto yet another bus playing incongruous elevator music.

The blinds are shut as they have been for every bus ride outside of the U.S., and we are all silent.

Many, Many miles have been traveled by the members of Golf Battery at this, the tail end of September, the onset of fall. We went from being three hours behind most of our family's time zone, while in California, to being eight hours ahead, here in Iraq.

The trip lasted 59 hours and we spent about 30 of them in flight, but we are finally here. The trek went smoothly, and now the Battery's mission, the Marine's personal goals, and the "countdown" can begin. Day one.. ■



Cpl. Kobeissi (Golf Radar)
3/14 Golf Btry
UNIT 73005
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O say can you C?

29 Palms Military Police Company spray Golf Battery with OC

by Emily A. Thompson



The final task for Golf Battery Marines was to endure a type of pepper spray called Oleoresin Capsicum, or OC. The training now gives Marines a non-lethal means of control over detainees in the Regional Detention Facilities. This is integral, as lethal force is rarely necessary once detainees are processed into the facility. After a spray to the face, Marines needed to demonstrate composure well enough to maneuver through a series of physical barriers, including "taking down" and controlling a fellow Marine. ■

♦ (Top) Major General O'Dell speaking to Golf Battery regarding the Iraq deployment.



♦ (Right) The OC Spray Day.



The New Inspector-Instructor for Golf Battery 3/14

Captain Joseph M. Lizarraga

Biography courtesy of Captain Joseph M. Lizarraga

Typically when a reserve unit is deployed the Inspector-Instructor stays "in the rear with the gear" to command the staff of active duty Marines, and facilitate the training of any new Marines that join the unit while the rest of the reserve Marines are deployed. For Golf Battery's new Inspector-Instructor, Captain Lizarraga, this is not the case. Currently he is serving as Platoon Commander for 3rd platoon, and will be the Officer in Charge of their RDF once in country.

Captain Lizarraga "enjoys the level of motivation displayed by the Marines, and is impressed by such rejuvenated attitudes." Additionally, he is excited to work with Marines from such diverse backgrounds. Captain Lizarraga knows what it's like to be a "nasty civilian." He worked for ten years at United Postal Service prior to his commission, which he credits with making him a more mature, understanding and effective leader.

Training Marines is not a new concept for the Captain. From Septemeber 2002 to July 2005, he served in numerous billets to include- Candidate Company Platoon Commander, Executive Officer, and Company Commander- while working on the staff at Officer Candidates School at MCB Quantico in Virginia. After his tour at OCS, Captain Lizarraga was hand-selected to attend the



Expeditionary Warfare School, where he learned how to operate a Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF).

Captain Lizarraga's first impression of Golf undoubtedly boosted his confidence that the Marines will do their jobs with both enthusiasm and professionalism.

The Marine Corps today demands much more technical proficiency and intelligence than ever before. Golf Battery Marines have proven themselves in "today's Corps" and will make the Captain proud to be apart of the mission.■

Local Newspapers

Check your local newspapers about your Marines getting promoted and awarded for their service during this deployment to Iraq

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MARINES IN FRONT

Where do you want to go today?

by Emily A. Thompson

Nothing could give a Marine more pride than to re-enlist on the top of Mount Serabachi. Sgt. Guillermo Santiago did just that. As one of a handful of active duty Marines in Golf, Santiago was serving as the Motor Transport Chief for MWCS-18, 1st Marine Air Wing in Okinawa, Japan, just before coming back to the states and joining the Trenton Marines.

As Motor Transport Chief, Santiago works directly for Golf's headquarters element, and has overseen the care and custody of every vehicle the Battery utilized for their missions thus far. This includes preventative maintenance, driver coordination, and logistics for the myriad of convoys to and from the training sites, both in 29 Palms and Camp Lejeune. He credits his five motor "T" "bubbas", for keeping the motor pool operating as a well oiled machine; Cpl.

Thomas J. Patrick, LCpl. Joseph Duncan, LCpl. Jeremy S. Durrett, LCpl. Argenis J. Vargas, and LCpl. Ramon A. Perez.

On top of this already exhausting task, Santiago remains in fourth platoon, setting a strong fervor for his junior Marines to follow.

(Santiago) has the active duty wealth of knowledge to share with not only his platoon but with all Marines," says acting Battery Gunnery Sergeant, GySgt Martin D. Nuckols, remarking on his

proactive posture. "He is an outstanding Marine."

As with any mission, Santiago expects some hiccups upon arriving in country, such as establishing duty rotations, language barriers, and living conditions that Marines aren't accustomed to. Having lived out of a sea bag in cramped conditions in Japan for three years, this Puerto Rican native knows of the hardships that come with

deployment and being far from home.

"To be so far away from everyone at first will be hard," says Santiago, "but it will be a good environment for my Marines to learn how to interact with each other." Their RDF is one of the most remote of the four that Golf will be running.

Regardless of what billet Santiago fills from one day to the next, it is apparent that his concern for Golf Marines is

ardent. "Being as close as possible to (my Marines), and to know their way of thinking, helps me understand when something's wrong," says Santiago.

Santiago understands the importance of being humble enough to empathize with his junior Marines, yet stay distant enough to command on an authoritative level. In his own words, "Lead by example, not my exception." ■



◆ (Right)
Sgt. Guillermo
Santiago
Golf Battery
Motor-T Chief

Marines Corner

What do you want your family to send you?



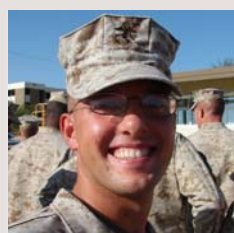
LCpl. Joshua B. Johnson
2nd Platoon
"Send some Cigarettes"



Sgt. Michael J. Kozak
3rd Platoon
"Tapes of all the Jets
games and Jets DVD's"



Cpl. Terrell L. McCain
1st Platoon
"Phone Cards and
Protein"



LCpl. Aaron R. Nestor
4th Platoon
"Chevrolet Corvette
Magazines"

From the First Sergeant's Corner,

Marines are our most precious asset.

Congratulations to Golf Battery for completing their prescribed training prior to entering the country of Iraq. The training has taken 18 weeks with the expectation of working nearly 18 hours a day to accomplish. The Marines of Golf Battery have prevailed with great discipline and focus. We have left 29 Palms and are currently in Iraq. The Marines total travel time took 50 hours and 54 minutes. The travel hours were long and full of many transfer and waiting stations to include New York and Kuwait. The Marines have landed in Iraq to experience fair weather, bottled water, and a world full of powdery dirt.

Currently, Golf Battery is getting acclimated to the environment and learning their way around the base, discovering that the chow halls on base will more than exceed their nutritional needs. They have been provided with a living space similar to a small college dorm and a roommate.

Golf Battery has started to take control of the mission at hand and will soon complete a turnover from the prior unit.

For the Families; remember that we have started our deployment portion of the unit's activation and have made a smooth transition to the country of Iraq. Your love ones are doing fine and thank you again for your continued support.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P. Manriques".

First Sergeant Manriques